




## THE COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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### PURPOSE

- In developing a schoolwide program, a school must look at multiple data sources to identify the most pressing academic needs affecting the teaching and learning program.
  - This data will help the school monitor and assess what is going on in the program presently to help make better decisions in the future.
  - Analysis of this data will help to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the academic program.
  - Decisions must be based upon data-not feeling or guesswork.
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## THE FIVE AREAS OF CONCENTRATION

- Student Achievement
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Professional Development
- Parental and Community Involvement
- School Perspective and Organization

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## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

- How well do students meet academic standards?
- School completion rates/transitions
- Performance on state and local assessments
- Are there measureable goals for achievement?
- Graduation and attendance rates
- Number of disciplinary issues and types
- Research-based intervention processes
- Other non-academic indicators of student success

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## CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

- Teaching methodologies are up-to-date and reflect state, local, and federal content standards
- On-the-job opportunities to improve instruction, raise staff expectations, and access to high-quality instructional materials
- Frameworks in core content areas are research-based
- Multiple assessment tools are available and results are used to inform instruction
- Teacher role in developing/selecting assessments
- Instructional technology is available and used
- Evaluation of instructional practice and programs is performed

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## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Ongoing and embedded opportunities for meaningful PD
- Staff selection of PD
- Follow-up for PD opportunities
- Collaborative effort to work as team members and mentors
- Relationship between PD and classroom instruction
- Common planning time for staff members
- Evaluation of PD opportunities and corrections made if necessary

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## PARENTAL AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- In what ways are parents and community involved in meaningful activities that support student learning
- Are they involved in school decision making
- Health/language/parenting skills are available
- High-quality and meaningful school-parent communication
- Partnerships with local services and businesses
- Community perceptions of the school
- Evaluation of community involvement strategies

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## SCHOOL PERSPECTIVE AND ORGANIZATION

- Class sizes
- Adequate time for remediation for unlearned material
- Mission and vision statements support school goals
- Roles of administrators, teachers, parents, students, and specialists in leading instructional improvement
- How are budgets determined and priorities set?
- Discipline and safety policies are in place
- Climate and culture of the school

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## CONDUCTING THE COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- Should be the focus of the planning process
- This is the database from which the plan is developed
- Must have a team focus
- Link goals with hard data
  - Gather enough data to direct planning
  - Do not gather so much that the team cannot determine a focus

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## DATA COLLECTION METHODS AND PLANS

- Data sources
  - School and district reports and records
  - Statistics from community-based organizations
  - Face-to-face or telephone interviews/focus groups
  - Surveys
  - Classroom observations and student work
  - Evaluation results
- Potential Sources of Information
  - Teachers
  - Administrators
  - Other school staff
  - Parents
  - Students
  - Other community stakeholders

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## COLLECTING DATA AND SUMMARIZING EVIDENCE

- Questions are phrased appropriately
- Purposes of questions are clear
- Keep responses confidential
- Time for surveys to be taken and returned
- Be available for questions
- Keep the data collection brief and easily understood
- Plan on how to summarize the information
- If computerized, make sure there is access to the appropriate technology.

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## ANALYZING PROGRAM NEEDS AND SETTING GOALS

- Strengths and weaknesses of the current program
- Evidence to support assertions about strengths and needs
- Is more data needed; if so, what is the follow-up process
- What are the data-driven priorities
- Needs for different student populations were addressed
- Can goals (SMART) be specified, benchmarks for progress developed, and outcomes set in measureable terms?

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## COMPREHENSIVE NEEDS ASSESSMENT INVENTORY

- Interviews with all stakeholders
- Conduct and analyze district/school surveys
- Evaluate assessment policies overall program
- Review district/school curriculum and curriculum and pacing guides
- Assess special supplemental programs, and their effectiveness
- Highly qualified staff
- Professional development program
- Student demographics
- Other types of student data
- Other school/district improvement plans

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## RESOURCES

- Comprehensive Needs Assessment Process
  - <http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/TitleI/CompNeedsAssessProcess.pdf>
- Sample Comprehensive Needs Assessment Inventory
  - <http://www.opi.mt.gov/pdf/TitleI/CompNeedAssessInventory.pdf>

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